shops to supply her with goods, but took a special pride in buying each product from the town where the best quality of it was manufactured. She could do this either by my father's being posted within its district, by going there on a pagoda-visiting expedition, or by having relatives posted there; and a survey of all the household possessions I can remember makes a cross-section of Burmese crafts. All our blankets were Burmese *saungs*, good stoutly woven cotton pieces, about 7 feet long and 4½ feet wide. We had single ones of red, black and yellow stripes which looked very bright and barbaric; they came from the Chin Hills. We used these in the hotter months. During the colder months we used thicker *ok-saungs* which we got from Pakokku; they were 14 feet long and used doubled, with a fringe at both ends. These were woven very strong and white, with bold red stripes on them in pleasing combinations. All these saungs washed more and more beautiful to our childish eyes. My mother had a big collection of them in wooden chests and some of them have lasted 30 years and are still beautiful.

She was also very jealous of her collection of *hpyas*, mats for sleeping or sitting on, woven closely of the fibres of a reed called *thabaw*, or, finer still, of the outer skin of a grass-like plant, the *thin*. These light and flexible mats or *thinbyu* came from Laymyethna, "The Town of Four Faces". They were equally smooth on both sides and had velvet borders piped on, broad at one end and narrower at the other, to distinguish the head end for nobler use, and to be sure of always resting the feet on the same ignoble end. We had them in big sizes for the beds and for afternoon naps on the verandah, and smaller sizes for prayers and for visitors to sit on. My mother kept them in rolls, five or six rolled together according to quality, covered with a cylinder of ticking and stood end up along her dressing-room.

Although we used imported crockery for the table we could not do without Burmese pottery for other purposes. Water-pots and goblets of light pottery from Twante, near Rangoon, were necessary to keep the water cool. There must be special pots for the altar water, for washing faces, for drinking water (in which pot, however, we kept a sand filter bought from Rangoon), and goblets in all bedrooms. For baths we had big black voluminous jars from Upper Burma, of a less porous pottery with a salt glaze on it, about 30 inches high and wide-mouthed. Smaller ones like these were kept for pickling mangoes and other green fruits. In the kitchen also, the modern aluminium pots would not do for such purposes as cooking acid leaves and fish curry that had tamarind in it; an earthen pot was always used for *chimbaung*, roselle leaves. Moreover, the *salaungbon*, or cover, of an earthern pot can always be used for baking fish paste, a daily

511 necessity, by pressing the paste flat on the inside of the cover and
415 putting it over the fire; the top knob of the pottery always remains cool
252 enough to be touched by the time the paste is baked. On festival days
415 my mother bought dozens of little earthern dishes, no bigger than an
372 English coffee saucer. They were called *hsi-mi-khwet*, oil-flame dishes,
527 in which we burned lights of cotton wick and kerosene, and lined veran-
511 dahs and window-sills with bright fairy lights in the night breeze.

We had stoneware in the house too. The *kyaukpyin* is a flat circular piece of stone for grinding the bark of the *thanakha* (*limnoria acidissima*) tree, to use as a cosmetic. It has a canal all around to receive the ground paste. Kyaukpyins can be bought in all varieties and sizes in any bazaar, but my mother always got hers through the headman of Salé village, in Upper Burma, where they use a particularly suitable kind of rock which is durable and yet helps to make the paste smooth. We had some beauties, heavy pieces of about 14 inches across, a square around the circular canal, with carved figures on the corners and the ponderous legs. With the right quality of bark the ground thanakha fell in a smooth golden flow into the canal. Formerly, all women used this cream as the sole substitute for powder, letting it dry on the face and whiten it, but the sophisticated ones now use imported powder as giving a less artificial appearance.

Yet even the most ardent Max Factor fans cannot give up thanakha entirely for its great value lies in its astringent properties; it would have great success with European women who use mud-packs, because it acts like a mild and pleasant mud-pack. It also has cooling and refreshing properties, it is fragrant; older women apply it over the entire body after their baths, like talcum powder. My mother says it smooths the skin and, indeed, victims of smallpox who are left with deeply marked faces, have their skins smeared with thick thanakha many times a day, and after a few months there is a definite improvement. The thanakha bark is the most used, but barks of the red and white sandalwood and other trees (*nethapyu, nethani, kalamè, a-hmway*) are more fragrant and used on the body. Bad bark from the bazaar grinds gritty and dries patchily, but special consignments come from Myingyan and Pakokku, cut into six-inch lengths from branches two inches in diameter. A daily task of the girls in each household is to grind thanakha, and the commonest sight is a girl on a verandah with a kyaukpyin, a mug of

that is, the D.I.S. (District Inspector of Schools), whether active or retired, was usually more permanent and could dig his toes in more happily. The social relationship was also ideal. Earning less than the other officials, he could yet offer them this rich hospitality of natural pleasures.

When we were in Maubin the D.I.S. was our friend U Taik Wan. He and his family of ten sons and daughters had the u-yin developed to its fullest. He had a low large house where the river took a bend and had fenced in this bed with bamboo stakes and a diving platform. The garden orchard stretched away from the house to a bamboo hut at the far end, with open verandahs under the trees. The speciality of his orchard were his sweet-sour marian trees. The marian is the *Ionea Burmanica*, common to Burma and northern Assam, where it forms an ideal appetizer for the heat-drowsy inhabitants. It is sour, of a sharp biting sourness which now makes my mouth water with longing. It is too sour to eat except doused in strong salt sauce or fish paste, salt being our antidote to sourness, in which I differ from the English idea of cooking, for salt combines and merges in with sourness whereas a pound of sugar thrown into a gooseberry tart would still leave it too sour for me. The marian is a small fruit, green when young and orange-yellow when ripe, with a pretty purple seed which has given its name to the Burmese colour "mauve". There is a sweet variety which is not popular. Sometimes, however, a prize tree is found which produces a sweet-sour marian, a sour fruit with its sting taken off. Such a tree should be treated with the greatest care; its fruits must never be salted or pickled as sour fruits are treated, because the "sour" use would communicate itself to the tree by what may be called sympathetic magic. Rather, my mother made jam (with sugar) of these marians, for the improvement of U Taik Wan's tree.

My mother was very punctilious about such things; the girl servants were never allowed to pluck the citron leaves for our salad because a woman in menstruation makes the tender leaves of the citron tree curl up and lose their succulence when she plucks them. U Taik Wan had a row of sweet-sour marian trees which he guarded from flying foxes by throwing a net across one face of them, showing a wall of these creatures hanging head downwards, to passers-by.

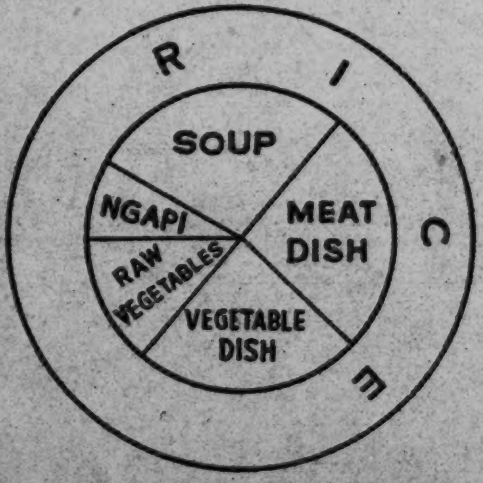
Our pyaw-pwè-sas at the Taik Wan's always began with a lot of water-fun. We never used bathing dresses, but adapted our longyis for swimming. This longyi is shaped and wrapped, like the more famous sarong, at the waist normally, but women and girls take it above the bosom when they discard their jackets. This enables all our poorer women to bathe with perfect decorum at public wells and streams.

(83)

CHAPTER ELEVEN

IF my aunt's character and speech were full of sharpnesses with which she jabbed at people, they will all be forgiven her for the sensuous delights which she provided for one and all with her qualities as a cook and an expert on foods. She was such a wonderful cook, she used to be asked to supervise at *a-hlu*, the mass cooking for free feasting of clergy and townspeople. She regarded the feasting of others as her one indulgence in life. In all other respects she economized and denied her tastes like all Burmese spinster ladies, but in the matter of food she considered that we did not live lavishly or plenteously enough. She knew the rarest tit-bits, the physiological effects of eating any particular food, the properties of leaves, the times of year when the most ordinary foods had the greatest beneficent influence.

The field of Burmese food is a rich territory, and so little explored by foreigners who will normally hear only of the ngapi, rice and salad leaves of the poorest people, that I am tempted to write a whole chapter on it, as dedication to my Kyi-Kyi Lon. The composition of the average plain Burmese meal is: boiled white rice; the *hingyo* or soup; the ngapi or condiment dish; the *to-sa-ya*, "dipper", or raw green vegetable dish which may be classed as a naked salad; the dressed or cooked vegetable dish; and the *hin*, the "curry" of meat or fish to provide the gravy. Roughly, the importance and quantity of each dish may be shown thus, diagramatically:



If any visitors are expected there may be one or two other dishes, but this is the standard meal and is enjoyed by all classes of people except the poorest; a-so-ya mins, rich men, clerks and petty traders all eat the same, more or less. For a family of four or five persons two such meals can be provided daily at a cost of about Re. 1/- or Re. 1/4 in an average district town or village.

264 This is for the fresh bazaar, most families storing rice, saltfish and
511 ngapi, and sesamum oil for cooking, by the month or longer periods.

The rice is cooked to result in clean and separate grains. The usual
• 252 method is to put it on the fire with cold water, using judgment as to the
262 amount of grain and water for the pot. A person who cannot "cut his coat according to his cloth" is "*ko-oh hnin ko hsan ma-tan bè :* his grain and pot do not accord". When, after coming to the boil, the rice is cooked but not yet soft, it is drained by decanting; the water is kept aside for starching the jackets of the women in the daily wash, and the pot is put back on to coals or half off a fire, with the lid left open to let the steam escape and complete the cooking of the rice. It is shaken once or twice during this process, but there is no harm done if a bad servant forgets to do this or puts the pot back on a strong fire, for then the burnt rice is scraped up in a cake (*gyo*) and is eaten, dipped in oil and salt, by the children with great relish.

The soup is always clear. The great majority of soups are plain hingyos, with a stock of fish, prawn or dried prawn; flavoured with ngapi, beaten garlic or onion. It is made fresh for each soup, and when it comes to the boil, green vegetables are thrown in and left just long enough to wear down the tough cellulose. The vegetables are never overcooked. Throwing in the vegetables is called *hingyo hkut-tè*, ladling out the soup, and the green things for ladling are numerous indeed. Of leaves, the tamarind, the sorrel, the drumstick (*moringa pterygosperma*), the *kinmun*, the calabash, the mustard, various types of spinach, are only some. Some particular leaves, stalks or fruits require adaptations in the soup they ladle; for example, green chillies with the sorrel, pepper corns with the calabash; and the neem and *mezali* leaves are so bitter that they must be rubbed in salt and cooked three times before they can be eaten. All leaves used for soup have a distinct and delicate flavour. If the soup were strained after the leaves had been boiled in it a few minutes, one could still identify the taste. Richer soups are made with stock of meat—pig's trotters, chicken or duck—and are ladled with dried mushrooms, dried flowers or vermicelli strands, transparent and fair as the lotus.

263 The ngapi, condiment, dish has several standard forms. "Ngapi"
[438] is the general term applied to any of its forms. Usually it comes to the housewife as seinsa ngapi, from Tenasserim, such as is made by my aunts in Ye, or from Yandoon in the Delta region. This high-smelling, strongly flavoured paste is stored in glazed earthen jars and flavours almost all dishes or is cooked into its own palatable forms. It is fried with chillies and pounded dried prawns into a crisp brownness, in which form Europeans like it as a toast spread which they call *balachaung*. It

tastes something like the product known as Patum Peperium or Gentleman's Relish. More Burmese is *ngapi-chet* (ngapi cooked), when it is fried in a more oily and moist form with tomatoes, tamarind water, green chillies, red chillies, garlic and onion; or *ngapi-daung* (ngapi pounded), when it is pounded into a smooth paste with prawns, ginger, onion and chilly; or *ngapi-thok* (ngapi mixed), when it is made into a salad by baking it dry and then mixing chopped onion, green chillies and citron leaves and a squeeze of lemon. 263

The to-sa-ya, dipper dish, to dip into the ngapi, of raw green vegetables, consists of leaves, flowers, buds, stalks, and young fruit of all kinds—green mangoes when they are the size of marbles, mango flowers, green marians, *danyin-thi*, citron leaves, coriander leaves, cucumbers, *zaung-ya-thi*, *chep-paung-thi*, and a host of others which can be plucked by villagers from hedges or gardens or jungle patches. The dressed vegetable dish may be a *lethok* or a *thanat*. Lethok, hand-wiping-or-mixing, is a mixture of finely shredded or cut vegetable (say green papaya, grown green mango, marian or citron) with the balancing ingredients of oil for mixing smoothly; dried prawn powder and bean powder for filling; tamarind water for sourness if fruit is not sour; ngapi or fish sauce for salting; green or powdered red chilly for spicing; and crisp fried garlic and onion to set off and dress the whole. In a thanat we can make the orthodox cauliflower, cabbage, brinjals, beans, etc., into a delicious dish by boiling them with vinegar and water till they are not quite cooked, draining them, rolling them in cooked oil in which salt and a little baked ngapi have been dissolved, scattering sesame seeds and crisp fried garlic and onion. Some vegetables which have a natural succulence are made into thanat uncooked. They are cut up, soaked in vinegar for some hours, drained well and dressed in the same way. Cucumber and horse-radish treated thus are delicious and crunchy. Besides being made into salads, vegetables are "fried". This is not fat frying. Only the seasoning, consisting of a small quantity of chopped pork or shrimps, crushed garlic and ngapi, is fried in the merest fraction of sesamum oil, then the bean sprouts, cabbage or what not, chopped small, are spread over it. This is called *ok-tè*, covering with the vegetable; the lid is put on and the vegetable cooks in the steam from its own water content. Just before taking it off the fire, it is stirred with soya sauce, and, if taken off the fire at the correct moment, cauliflower, cabbage, beans and beansprouts are delicious. Some vegetables lend themselves to an extension of this method in the *kyaw-gyet*, fry-cook, what the English Domestic Science schools call a "combination method" of cooking. Here the fried seasoning ingredients are stronger flavoured, water is 262 252

added after the vegetable, and a dish which is half soup, half curry is produced. Gourds are often cooked in this way.

The "curry" is called curry for want of a better word. The Burmese hin does not contain the spices usually associated with hot curries. The standard hin is the *hsi-byan*, oil-returns-curry, in which the seasoning and gravy are produced by pounded chilly, ginger, garlic and onion, fried in oil which has first been cooked free of moisture. This is fried brown while the meat is diced and rolled in salt and a little turmeric. Then the meat is put in and cooked till all its moisture has gone and the "oil returns". Then small quantities of water are added and the pot left until the meat is tender. The chief meats used are pork, chicken and duck. Beef and mutton are not liked generally, and many families, who wish to deny themselves the eating of the flesh of one animal in order to gain merit, give up beef. The curry described here is only the stock recipe. There are numerous special meat dishes, steamed, roasted, sauted. But it is fish and prawn that Burmese people love best. We have a great variety of sea and freshwater fish, each lending itself to special forms of cooking, from the richest nga-tha-lauk, through *nga-myin*, *nga-gyin*, *nga-ponna*, *nga-the-lè-do*, to the black and cheap *nga-gyi* and *nga-khu*. Crabs and crayfish with the lovely red oil in their heads; nga-myin cooked with ginger and soya sauce to make a "sweet" dish or with tamarind and ground chilly to make a peppery one; *nga-hpa-ma* cooked with vinegar and citronella grasses and green chillies into a thick soup, or *nga-yan*, cooked with tamarind water and vegetables into a minestrone; nga-tha-lauk baked so that the flesh is rich and full, but the numerous bones made so soft that they are no longer dangerous to swallow, or nga-khu fried so crisp as to give only a crunch and no taste; nga-ponna cooked into a hsi-byan curry with coriander leaves on top of the fishes, or *nga-but* cooked and stirred into a flaked consistency; *nga-pè* whose white flesh is kneaded with salt into a glutinous slab to fry in slices, or nga-gyin wrapped in banana leaves with strong flavouring ingredients and steamed in packets until it is ready to melt in your mouth. In their daily meals Burmese people relish the odd parts of animals rather than their flesh—the liver and crop of chickens and ducks, the trotters of pigs, he guts of goats, the entrails of freshwater and, indeed, the heads, tails, fins and roe of all fish.

Besides providing us with rich daily meals, my aunt found great delight in buying vast quantities of foods which were seasonal or only to be bought in certain areas. Mushrooms appearing about May were bought literally in basketfuls, each basket being fifteen inches wide and fifteen high. These were cooked in various ways and eaten by family and servants for about three days on end or longer, until someone

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statuary are to be seen, besides abundance of chairs and tables, and occasionally bedsteads, while clocks, kerosine lamps, looking-glasses, and lounge chairs are universal. But it is very different in the village houses. There is practically no furniture at all there, for a chair is of no use to a jungle Burman, and without chairs tables are equally useless. Consequently all that is to be seen in a village house is the goodman's box, and a few woven mats and hard bamboo pillows to sleep on. Cots are not used, for one of the Ten Precepts, to be kept on duty-days, is that one must not sleep on a high place. The only furnishings visible are the mats rolled up during the day with the rugs or blankets which serve for bedding. The mats themselves are probably home-made, manufactured from fine strips of bamboo, the best being those with the polished silicious surface outside, which stand any amount of work. Softer, finer articles are made from the skin of the theng, a species of rush, which takes a black dye, and is often worked into patterns, but no one has anything more elaborate, and indeed nothing better could be wished for. A cooler bed could not easily be found. In the country, also, the cooking place during the rains is in the house. During the fine weather culinary operations are carried on in the open air, behind the premises. The cooking range is nothing more than a box, two or three feet square, and six inches deep, filled up with earth or ashes, and on the top of this the wood used as fuel is piled. The cooking utensils and the dining service are equally simple. The former consists of nothing further than two or three earthen pots with lids to them, and a wooden spurtle to stir the contents with. Close at hand is a jar full of water, with a ladle—half a cocoa-nut with a handle through it. These are all the kitchen appliances. In place of table there is a huge round dish of lacquered wood, called a byat. These byats are sometimes as much as three feet and more in diameter, and on them is heaped up in a gigantic pile the rice, while the curry is served in little bowls disposed round about. A young couple have, therefore, no ruinous expenses when they set up house. The inventory of effects necessarily is soon made.

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Outside the house there is not much more to notice.

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The abundance of land allows every one to have a court-yard of his own. In this the farmer keeps his cart and plough, the fisherman his boat. The buffaloes and oxen of the whole village are usually all together on a pasture-ground kept by some speculative individual, who charges a couple of rupees or so for feeding and looking after them. The care exercised is not very great. Heat and rain kill many of them, where, as is too frequently the case, no shelter is available; foot-and-mouth disease, and other epidemics, carry off great numbers, and finally, they are not at all averse to killing one another. Consequently the vultures are frequently to be seen on the trees round the village pasture-land. Besides his implements the house-owner has always in his yard a hand rice-mill. Husking paddy has become, near the big towns, quite a separate trade, and abundance of cleaned rice may be bought in the bazaars, but in the village every family husks its own rice, the grain being kept stored in a small granary in the yard. The milling is done by the women, and there are two processes in the operation. The mill consists of two wooden cylinders about two feet thick, the inner surfaces of both roughened in a simple way by the cutting of radii from their centres, the lines being about a quarter of an inch deep. The upper cylinder has a funnel-shaped hole cut through it, to let the grain down, and is worked backwards and forwards by a long pole loosely fastened in, the rice coming out between the two cylinders, and falling on mats down below. It is winnowed either in the primitive way of throwing it into the air, so that the light husk may be blown away, or, often nowadays in Lower Burma, by a hand-worked pair of fanners, introduced since the English occupation.

The rice is not yet, however, ready for cooking. The inner pellicle has still to be removed, and this is done in a big wooden mortar. Two varieties are in use, worked either by hand, as an apothecary pounds his drugs, the pestle being very long and heavy; or by foot, when the wooden mortar is sunk in the ground. The pestle in this latter case consists of a short, stumpy piece of wood, let into a long lever near the end. This lever is supported on two uprights at some distance from the mortar, and the machine is worked by the

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housewife or her daughter stepping on and off the bar, so as to raise the pestle and let it fall on the rice in the mortar. The rice is very thoroughly cleaned in this way, and Burmans prefer it to that which has passed between the mill-stones of the European factory. The Derbyshire, or composition stones, do their work only too thoroughly, and remove so much of the pellicle as to take away all the flavour, besides that the great heat caused by the steady grinding tends to the same result. Consequently the pleasant refrain of the girls chanting at their work may be heard all over the village after dark, and when a large quantity has to be prepared for some offering to the Sacred Order on a feast-day, the chanted chorus rises and falls round about the homestead often till long past "midnight cock-crow," till the rising of the "red star" warns them to retire to rest, tired, but happy, for such a good work earns great merit. A sesamum oil-press is also frequently found in at least one house in every village. This is equally simple in its construction. It consists of a deep wooden trough, in which the seeds are pressed by a heavy upright timber fixed in a frame. The weight is increased by a long lever, on the end of which a man sits and guides a bullock which goes round in a circle, thus crushing and turning the seed at the same time.

The carts are very strongly built, and are remarkable for the way in which the floor curves upwards towards the back in the same way as the boats do. In Upper Burma formerly the wheels were mostly composed of one solid, roughly-rounded slab of wood, or in some cases of two semicircular slabs joined together, and these are still found, but more and more rarely, in out-of-the-way places in the upper province, though wheels constructed in European fashion with spokes are mostly in use, and Government now prescribes a three-inch tyre on all district roads. Occasionally in the old days to save trouble the carter started with a square wheel, and trusted to time to round it for him. Padauk (*Pterocarpus indicus*) is the wood most valued for this purpose, but it is too expensive for most people. The wheels are never greased, and make hideous shrieking noises as they revolve. This serves to keep away tigers and wild

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when they attend a similar assemblage at Htun Aung's house at the other end of the village.

But after an hour or so they settle down to do a little work. The young men—kālathas, they call themselves—"Corinthians, lads of mettle"—have brought with them a number of wooden mortars, with a heavy pestle working on a lever; and these they set up and commence to husk the rice. The process is very simple. A few handfuls of the paddy are thrown into the mortar, the workers step off and on the lever which raises and lets fall the solid wooden pestle, and the husk is every now and then blown out and the grain stirred up a little. The Burmans infinitely prefer rice husked in the national way to that which is sent out from the European steam-mills. The big Derbyshire or composite stones do their work only too effectually; they take off not only the hard shell, but also the inner cuticle of the grain, which contains the chief flavour; and, moreover, the heat which the steady grinding induces, scorches out a great deal of what taste remains. Therefore at every house there is to be found the primitive national apparatus in which the girls of the household every morning or evening prepare the rice for the day's consumption. But to-night they are relieved from such hard work. The village youths for once in a way exert themselves; and all the girls have to do is to wash out a few dishes and prepare the bamboo-lacquered platters, the pyramidal ôk, in which the tamanè is to be carried to the yahans and the pagoda to-morrow, and get ready the palm-leaves in which less exalted people will receive their modicum of the stew. The whole actual work might be finished in little over an hour, but that is the intention neither of the giver of alms nor of the assembled young men and maidens. They have come much more for merriment than for merit. Else why that great pile of le'hpet? For the condiment is an anti-soporific, and if you take enough of it, you will be able to see all through a forty-eight hours' play, and give your friends an outline of the plot before you lapse into a slumber lasting twice round the clock.

Accordingly, after a quarter of an hour's work, the "prince" of the local amateur dramatic company jumps off his perch, and commences the "White Dove" song from the

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and the odour of the fruit may be realised by eating a "garlic custard" over a London sewer; others will be no less positive in their perception of blendings of sherry, noyau, delicious custards, and the nectar of the gods, while a somewhat objectionable smell is regarded as doing no more than suggest, or recall, a delightful sensation. I am not aware that any Englishman has been equally enthusiastic with regard to balachong, but there is no doubt that ngapi seinsa ["raw-eaten fish-paste," so called because it is fit for consumption without being cooked] is identical with this much-used substitute for anchovy sauce, and is often brought direct from the Burman bazaar by Madrasi butlers, who declare it has come all the way from Penang, and charge correspondingly.

Of ngapi there are three main kinds — ngapi gaung, taung-tha ngapi, and ngapi seinsa. Each of these has its special varieties, getting their names from the township where they are prepared, or from the species of fish used in their manufacture.

Ngapi gaung, or whole ngapi, is the most prized and the highest in price. That made at the village of Payāgyi, in the Angyi circle, not far from Rangoon, is celebrated from the rocky promontory of Modain, with its golden pagoda, to the barren solitudes of Mogaung, the Burmese Siberia. It may be made from any kind of fish, but the varieties preferred are the nga-ku, an amphibious, slimy fish, found in ponds and ditches wherever there is plenty of mud, and something under a foot and a half in length; and the nga-gyi, a fish very similar in general appearance and size, but called by the English the scorpion-fish, and very much dreaded for the wounds it causes with the pectoral spines. The great object in the preparation is to keep the fish quite whole, not so easy a matter as would at first appear. The process is as follows: A great mass of the fish, some of them only half dead, are thrown together into a big wooden mortar, and a man stands over them and works about with a curious cleaner made of a bamboo, the end of which has been slit and frayed into a kind of stiff brush. By this means it is surprising how soon the fish are scaled, and how effectively it is done. The larger specimens are, however,

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252 almost always cleaned by hand, the shoulder fins and the tail being also removed. They are then thoroughly rubbed with salt and tightly packed in bamboo baskets, each of which is well weighted down. They are thus left for from twelve to twenty-four hours, the superfluous juices of the fish straining out at the bottom. Then they are cautiously taken out one by one, well rubbed with salt again, and laid out on a mat in the sun to dry. On the second day they [415] are equally carefully packed away in huge earthenware jars with abundance of salt between the layers of fish. These jars are then put away—no easy matter with some of them, which might have served to conceal the forty thieves of the *Arabian Nights*—in as shady and cool a place as can be found. Gradually the liquid rises to the surface and evaporates by degrees, leaving a layer of solid salt on the top. Sometimes this fish-brine becomes alive with maggots, when the fish have not been sufficiently pressed, or have not had enough sun. When this occurs the liquid is drawn off the top and more salt is added, but in no case are any of the fish rejected. Usually the fish are ready for the market in a month's time, and will keep as long as may be wanted. They are eaten roasted, or fried somewhat in the same way as the "Bombay ducks," well known to the Anglo-Indian gourmand; sometimes also they are made into curries, the cook taking as great care as the manufacturer to keep them 317 quite whole. The salt used is in many places, such, for example, as the Angyi township, made on the spot. The soil there is strongly impregnated with salt. Water is run through it after the ground has been ploughed. The water is then collected in a tank, whence it is taken to pots, placed over furnaces, and evaporated to dryness, and the salt obtained is piled on sloping boards so that the bittern may run off.

263 252 A specially esteemed variety of the ngapi gaung is that called the nga-tha-lauk, after the fish of the same name, the hilsa, or "Indian salmon," which would be perfect, were it not supplied with bones all through its body, seemingly utterly irresponsible and unconnected with the spine. This handsome fish, silvery, shot with purple and gold, is not scaled, nor are the head, tail, or any of the fins removed.

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Each fish is cleaned and rubbed with salt in the usual way and exposed to the sun. Then they are spread out on the floor of a shed on mats, and mats are also put over them, and on these are placed weights of some size. This is all that is required. In four days at the outside they are ready for sale, and are then handled with most reverential care by both buyer and seller, for the hilsa is a fish that the foreigner loves, and therefore always commands a good price.

The second kind is that called taungtha ngapi, that is, pounded fish, or fish-paste. It also frequently goes by the name of damin ngapi, from the bamboo trap in which the fish are usually caught. This is the form of ngapi which has earned the bad name for the whole preparation. It is made almost exclusively from shrimps and the smaller kinds of fish. These are spread out as they are caught, without the addition of salt or any cleaning whatever, on mats in the sun. There they remain for two, or perhaps three, days —by which time their condition is better imagined than closely investigated. They are then thrown into a huge wooden mortar and pounded together, with a liberal addition of salt. It does not take any very heavy work or length of time to reduce them to a state of mash, in which one fish is not to be distinguished from another. The whole is then heaped up in a great mound under a shed near the house, and several hollow bamboos, with little holes here and there in their sides, are thrust into it. Out of these a liquor, called nganpya ye, runs, and is carefully collected in jars set there for the purpose. This as well as some other fishy oils are greatly esteemed for culinary purposes, and fetch a good price. When these juices cease to run freely, the fish-paste is ready for sale, and is dug and shovelled out in an unceremonious way, contrasting very markedly with the loving care taken of the "whole fish ngapi." In the country boats it is usually carried in bulk, piled up as corn, or salt, or commodities of a like nature might be loaded; and therefore a boat which has once been used for this purpose is easily known again. In English steamers it is, of course, packed in jars, but the odours are none the less fragrant on that account. This is the true and only mode of preparation, and the marvellous tales

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
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000 related by some foreigners of the burial of the fish in the earth for periods varying from a week to a year (!) are due either to a guileless nature or a too powerful imagination. The soil of Burma needs no manure.

263 252 The fish most sought after for damin ngapi are those belonging to the family of cat- and dog-fish, from the circumstance that they have no scales, and therefore make a smoother compound. Some of these attain a huge size, the tame dog-fish at Thihadaw, above Mandalay, being quite five feet long, and blessed with mouths that would take in a leg of mutton. Many of them also have the peculiarity of breathing air, rising to the surface of the water and opening their mouths for the purpose; while, when the inland pools dry up after the rains are past, they are capable of making long journeys overland.

Seinsa ngapi is made entirely from prawns, and comes chiefly from the Tenasserim coast, Beit (the English Mergui) and Tavoy being the centres of its manufacture. The prawns are spread out on mats in the sun as soon as caught and left there till they are fairly well dried. Then they are mashed up by hand, abundance of salt being added, and are stirred up several times a day regularly for three days, lying out in the sun all the time. After that, the paste is ready for use, and is packed in small jars. Properly, seinsa is that made from the prawns exposed immediately after being caught. When some hours elapse before they are spread out to dry, the resulting ngapi is called yetpyán; and if a whole day elapses before the exposure, yet-ôk. The greater the delay, the more powerful the smell and the more piquant the flavour—a fact for Englishmen to remember when they take balachong. Ket ngapi is simply a variety made of large prawns, which are heavily pressed in baskets called ket, before they are put out in the sun to dry. They are then pounded with salt and pressed again, after which they are ready for consumption, either as they are or after frying.

263 438 Notwithstanding the open disfavour with which the English regard ngapi, the Burmese hold by it as the most savoury and necessary portion of their dinner, and vast quantities are exported to Upper Burma, where the manufacture, owing to the smaller fisheries, is not equal to the

342 514 In U Myaing's house the lavatory is in the kitchen and is walled off with woven KYU (kind of fiber) mat. There is a hole cut open in the board flooring, and the area underneath this opening also is walled off with woven KYU. U Myaing and family did not take their meals in the kitchen but in the house proper.

361 368 346 The PHON-GYI KYAUNG or monastery is located further downstream from the village. It is a two storied brick building comprised of nine rooms, each 6 TAUNG square. Children are not taught here but learn their lessons at the government school. This school, which is on [372] [364] YWE-GYI-ZWE side, teaches pupils up to the tenth standard. Below the PHON-GYI KYAUNG is the cemetery.

The houses in the village are separated one from the other by eight feet on each side. The rows of houses facing the river have porches on 342 both sides. U Myaing's house is typical of those found in the village - some may be more elaborate, some less. His house had been built only 435 six or seven years, and cost Rs. 3000/- at that time. There are no [651] accounts for each of the separate items and U Myaing does not remember. The land was free and they did not have to pay any revenue on it.

[366] Separate from the houses and on the riverside is a huge platform built [252] for to process fish including the making of NGAPI. U Myaing had no land that was owned round the house, although he could use the land directly in front of the house for various purposes.

U Myaing describes his house as follows;

342 592 "It is a wooden house, made of wooden posts - a two storied structure. The roof is of slates. Walls are of ZWE-NGA-ZWE wooden boards (boards 8 inches wide and about ¼ inch thick) and there are four rooms. Other people have similar houses. It is a LAY-KHE-KHE (a four-tree-house or a house which has four supporting poles across the front) and all seven of us live in the house. We keep a kitchen from the back and cook there. The kitchen has three windows at the back, with one door leading into the house. We all live together in three rooms. We keep bedrooms. (U Myaing is speaking of a sketch of the house here). This side is for visitors - there is a room for people who come to buy goods. The [366] old mother and the children live in one room and I and my wife in another with the smallest child. We eat in the front part of the house in one room at the foot of the sleeping place. There are nine 6 TAUNG rooms without partitions on each of the two floors. The sides of the house are enclosed with timber planks of ZI wood, but the bedrooms are also partitioned off. It is very wide and roomy to live in. The floor is made of teak planks."

a bamboo frame extending for about eight feet. The interior of the house contains piles of small boxes in which the bones and ashes of the P.V.O. dead are stored. Consequently no one lives inside. Seven families live under theeaves on three sides of the house along a narrow strip nine feet wide. The area is divided into a number of rooms "6 TAUNG square - the same room size as in the Pathwe house." U Myaing's family occupies 2½ such rooms at the corner of the building. The head space varies from 8 feet against the wall of the house to less than two feet at the edges of the eaves. A break in the eaves forms an entrance at the corner. Figuring one room to be equivalent to a 6 foot square room 3½ feet high, we arrive at a total of 315 cubic feet of living space for the 2½ rooms.

[764] 722 342

One and a half rooms are covered with a slightly raised bamboo floor on which U Myaing and his family sleep. A space 6' long by 2' wide is used as a work area and for social purposes, but this is not rigorously claimed, since the adjacent family frequently uses it as a storage space. In speaking of the refugee camp quarters U Myaing says:

> "It is very narrow (cramped) here. We eat and sleep in the same place. At Pathwe we kept 2 rooms separately to sleep in. Our house there was very wide and roomy. Here we sleep and cook all in one place."

[511]

The sleeping and eating area is separated from the adjacent family by a woven split bamboo partition about 5 feet high; at five feet three inches from the floor, a number of bamboo poles criss-cross to form rafters on which objects are stored.

Here the sleeping mats are rolled up, along with sleeping equipment which consist of U Myaing's wooden pillow, makeshift pillow of rag bundles, 1 holey woolen blanket. One mosquito net used by U Myaing and his wife is also suspended from these rafters. At the far end of the bamboo flooring, there are three baskets. One of these baskets contains the women's clothing; another contains rice. Two clay pots are at the side. The altar consists of a slant board placed on the wall above the sleeping area and equipped with a flower vase. The objects found in the cooking area are: "U" shaped fire area made by 3 bricks touching on edge, bamboo stool for Ma Aye Myaing, hollow bamboo blow tube for starting fire, cooking pots,

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[252]

recognised as over-stimulated by anxieties. "Don't talk my gall into disorder" is a common reaction to calamity tales. 158 753

The weather is important is maintaining health. Changeable weather as during the late part of the Monsoon season is generally unhealthy and gives rise to pulmonary disorders. One should provide head protection (through covering or shade from umbrella) from the sun's rays - which cause headaches by melting the brain. Colds come from getting wet in the rain resulting from the lack of sufficient bodily heat. MYEH HNOME (earth-vapour) which rises as a steam in the early morning or after sudden rains is unhealthful in causing sore eyes and other inflamations. The "steam of the body" healthfully goes out in ordinary bathing and adds to one's comfort. Heat is a key factor in health and sickness being readily discerned as causes of local or general infection. The additional concept of "like producing like" helps explain the above beliefs. 753 132

The odor of AH HNYAW (fried food) is especially dangerous to babies and persons in a weakened condition. When frying, which will create extensive fumes, is to be undertaken the cook must give warning to the neighbourhood so that susceptible ones can be protected. Such persons take refuge behind the thick, cloth mosquito nets. Many heated arguments take place in our servants' quarters when the Indian fried food fumes carry over to the Burmese apartments. It is observed that this danger applies peculiarly to the Burmese - Chinese are also exempt since they are seen to cook with babies strapped on their backs. [252] ● [186]

Parts of the body are cared for with special ingredients. The eyes are cleaned with pure water or coconut water. Oil is frequently dropped into the ears through a feather quill. The mouth and teeth are cleaned with salt. Bitter foods keep the stomach fit. 515 751

Babies up to 1 year are fed on mother's milk or cow's milk. After one, rice chewed by the mother "to make it digestible" is added with some dried fish. After two, the child can chew its own rice, have a little meat, but no hot condiments. After five the child eats the same foods as the adults but is not allowed sour foods as this will "lessen the weight". After 16 or 17, this restriction is 853 561 262

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FOOD

Eating Routine

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Ma Aye Myaing does the cooking with the help of the eldest daughter. U Myaing never cooks. In our third interview U Myaing prompted his wife what to say, concerning the routine of cooking, indicating that he understood the main outlines of the art:

> "In the morning the fire has to be made so as to cook the rice. After the fire is made the rice is washed and cooked. Then it is HNUT (water drained and rice steamed.) The onions to put in the curry are then sliced, the chillies are pounded vinegar is added and then everything is placed on the fire. This is what you are required to say."

Thus prompted, Ma Aye Myaing gets off to a fast start in giving information of her province.

> "I rise early in the morning, draw water, make the fire, set the tea-pot on, wash the rice, cook it, drain the water away, steam it, pound chillies, chop fish, peel potatoes, slice onions and skin prawns. Sesamum oil is first put in and THUT (smell of oil is cured) with onions and chillies in the pan. After this the potatoes are put in - potatoes and prawns. We cook once in the morning at 7 o'clock and once in the evening at 3 o'clock. In the morning there are times when we cook potatoes with prawn, and also times when we cook with vegetables. The evening meal is cooked with fish - it differs. Sometimes also we cook the fish by itself.
>
> "The meals we had to eat in Pantanaw were better of course. Only at times do we find cooking oil and onions etc. for our meals here. Rice has to bought; only at times do we have fish to eat. Sometimes we have to eat with vinegar and chillies (for curry)- sometimes vegetables and prawns."

U Myaing gives some information on the source of food in camp.

[722]

> "The government brings rice, oil and salt once every 7 days - four times a month. Sometimes they do not come four times but only about twice a month. In Pathee where food was concerned, there were fields. We could buy the paddy from the fields very cheaply. We get fish from the IRS also."

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There are no great differences between cooking procedure in Pathee and in the refugee camp. The only difference is that, prices being lower in Pathee, there is some difference in the ingredients used and the dishes eaten. For example, fish oil, which can be used in cooking was obtained free of charge. It was so plentiful that the villagers even used it as a lubricant for the rice mill and also as axle grease for their bullock carts.

Cooking and Eating Utensils

Ma Aye Myaing does her work directly in front of the fireplace in a squatting position, often resting on the tiny bamboo stool. A few sticks of firewood, or brush, are placed within the three sided enclosure made of three single bricks on edge. A hollow bamboo tube about 10 inches long and 1½ inches in diameter is periodically used to blow the fire to a hot flame in lieu of a draft. The identifications of the cooking and eating utensils given below were provided by Daw Aw Zar and U Myaing in an interview in which photographs of the objects were used.

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[516]
[352]
[372]

HTA MIN O (cooking pot): This is an earthenware jar used for cooking vegetables and other foods. It is a round based globular form with outflaring rim. A wide conical shaped lid with flat disc knob for fairing goes over the orifice. It is smooth, light tan in colour throughout and about ¼ inch in thickness. It is tempered with sand. A stamped design encircles the widest diameter on the body. This diameter is about 7 inches, height is 4½ inches. One or two are kept on hand (Pathus: several. Camp: one). They cost 5 annas each. This sand tempered, stamped, earthenware appears in the early European contact period (late 1500's) at Syrian (Orr, K.G. "Stratigraphy in Lower Burma" Ms. in preparation.) It is rapidly being discarded in favour of aluminum pots which are not nearly as cheap but do not break. Traditionally this pot is used to cook rice. In speaking of its use Daw Aw Zar said: "We keep one or two, to boil vegetables and do other things to eat, seeing that there are seven people we have to cook (i.e. rice) with a big aluminum pot."

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[178]

HIN O (curry pot): This jar is generally of the same shape as the one described above but is wider at the orifice (8 inches diameter) though about the same height. It is of the same sand type; has a wavy-line stamped design just under the rim. Customarily equipped with a conical lid, this vessel had a flat aluminum lid. This vessel is used to cook curry. It was brought from Pathus, where it was bought at a cost of 6 annas. Number used in Pathus: several, camp: 1.

[435]

LAPHET YE-OH (tea pot): The tea pot is also of tan earthenware and generally of the same ware as the cooking pots, with the exception that the surface was carefully scraped and slightly burnished. The body is globular, with thumb-like spout, and semi-circular clay handle. This pot was brought from Pantanaw, where it had cost 8 annas.

[323]

KUN O (food storage jar): Wherever the cooking vessels are moulded by hand with the aid of a paddle, and lack glazing, the storage jars are glazed and have been made on the wheel. These glazed jars also have flat disc bases, and pear-shaped bodies with contracted necks and short, collar-like rims. In every way they appear to be a separate tradition from the cooking ware. The glaze is dark reddish-brown over a hard-baked purple-red core. The interior is thoroughly glazed but the glaze only covers the upper half of the exterior. The reddish-brown glaze is recent, appearing in ceramic collections of the last century in Rangoon (Orr, K.G. "Stratigraphy in Lower Burma", the Merkina Street section) being preceeded by a yellow-black glaze in the early European period at Syrian.

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Salt saffron, oils, etc are stored in these jars. The one examined was about 4 inches in height and 5 inches in diameter. It came from Pathus and cost 3 annas. Number in Pathus several, camp: 1.

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NGA-YOT-SOK (Mortar): The mortar resembles an inverted truncated cone with a loop handle extending from the rim. It is made of the smeared-brown glazed ware described above. A teak wood pestle (GYEGWE) is a rounded club about 15 inches long and 2 inches in diameter. Some are ornate with circular bands, but U Myaing's club is plain. It took him about an hour to make. The mortar was purchased here and cost 10 annas. Number of mortars in Pathwe: 1, Camp: 1. [531]

DAN O (aluminum cooking pot): The aluminum cooking pot is a wide cylindrical form with a flat lid. They are made locally. U Myaing's family had three in camp ranging in size from 10 inches in diameter and 4 inches high to 12 inches in diameter and 5 inches high. The vessels were used for cooking rice and curry. A pot holding 6 LON of rice costs Rs. 6/-. Pathwe number: several, camp: 3. [435]

DANYIN LON (aluminum pail): One aluminum pail, cylindrical in form with a height of 7 inches and diameter of 6 inches, and wire handle, was used in camp as a container in hauling foods from market and in their preparations. It cost Rs. 2/8 in Rangoon. Pathwe: [435]

Miscellaneous containers: Several beer bottles and circular cigarette tins were used in camp to contain oils and spices.

SHWEH JAIK (Tiffin Carrier): A rectangular lunch box, or tiffin carrier, of aluminum was bought in Rangoon for Rs.3/8, Pathwe: Rs. 12/-.

KYWAY PAG-WEYA (China Plates): A single broken china plate was used as a cover for the water jar in camp. This was one of three brought from Pathwe, where they cost Rs. 2/-. This is a special ware which was usually reserved for guests. In Pathwe, the family had enough for family use and guests on special occasions.

THAN PAG-WEYA (enamelled iron plates): Two enamelled iron plates of shallow dish and bowl form (about 12 inches in diameter) were used in camp. These cost Rs. 2/- each. Pathwe: 0.

YAWEYA (stirring spoons): Two spatulate bladed spoons with thin handles 12 inches long were used as stirring spoons in the preparation of food. The iron one was bought in Rangoon and cost 10 annas. The wooden one was made by U Myaing in Pathwe out of teakwood. It took him 2 hours to make it with a small knife.

ZOOMB (eating spoons): Chinese porcelain spoons (KYWAY) and brass spoons (KYEE) were used indiscriminately to dip curry sauce over the rice. The Chinese spoons are boat shaped with high and hollow handles. The brass spoons are similar to European soup spoons The porcelain spoons were preferred aesthetically, but because the children frequently broke them, brass spoons were most commonly used. Cost and frequency: In Pathwe, 60. Camp: 8.
Food is commonly eaten with the fingers in all levels of Burmese society.

DAH (knife): The big knife used in camp for cutting fire-wood and other chopping jobs was about 1½ feet long including an 8 inch wooden handle bound in iron. The steel blade is curved slightly upward, has a square end and is used as a chopper frequently with two hands on the handle. The one in camp was bought "long ago" and cost Rs. 4/-. A small knife with a pointed steel blade was used for whittling and cutting in the preparation of food. Pathwe: 10, most for work in IN. Camp 2. [412] [435]

KAYWE (pot rest): A hollow disc woven of soft reeds with a diameter of 6 to 8 inches is used to rest pots on - so that the carbon on their bases will not blacken the surface on which they rest. These are readily made by the women of the family. [285]

PYI DAING (Measures): There were two of these containers, used for measuring rice in camp. The iron one had a hole in it, but was retained as a general container. It had been replaced by the wicker

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basket PYIDAUNG. Both cost a rupee. One does not seem to be preferred to the other except as getting them allows a bargain to be made. The form is that of a pear shaped body with a square base, measuring about 8 by 8 inches. The basket is constructed in the wicker technique with small, whole reeds. Pathwe: 2. Camp: 1.

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CHIN DAUNG (storage basket): The form of this basket is a larger version of the measurers. It has, however, an open weave giting a checkered effect to the sides and bottom. It is used to store objects including food. At Pathwe this basket was used in working the INS. The fish were scooped up, and later washed in them. The two used in camp were brought from Pathwe where they cost Rs. 1/4- Camp: 1, Pathwe: 15 for washing fish.

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Winnowing trays: Shallow baskets about 2½ feet in diameter and 2 inches high were used as shifting and storage trays. The SAGAW has a rounded base; whole the SAGAR has a flat base with fiber walls. Both are made of flat, wide-meshed reeds. The trays used in camp came from Pathwe where they cost Rs. 1/4 each. Pathwe: 1.

415

ZEE CHIN (Marketing basket): This basket is in the general shape of a cylinder, 1½ feet wide and 8 inches high, with open, flat reed sides and a semi-circular handle across the top. It is used to carry objects from market and to store them in the house. Pathwe: 2, Camp: 1.

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U Myaing expresses the contrast between the camp equipment and that of Pathwe: "These objects in camp are barely sufficient. We have to live as we are. In our own district we had sufficient to pail in boxes. The extra ones were nailed in boxes and only enough were taken out for the seven people who eat. When visiters come, good ones are brought out. Plates for curry, plates for eating rice. There were various kinds."

Food Items

262

Ma Aye Myaing gave as complete a set of data on the food consumption of her family as she could. The following data is inclusive for the family of seven, both in Pantanaw and the refugee camp. Ma Aye Myaing decides what dishes to cook for each meal of the day, and she does this without any consultation with U Myaing. She does not ask him what he would like for each meal, although sometimes when he expresses a desire for a certain dish she sees to it that it is prepared. She has a free hand in deciding what to cook for each meal in the day. Definitions of the weights and measures used follows in a glossary. The data is organized under the headings of (1) Main dishes and raw foods, (2) supplementary dishes and TO-KAYA (vegetables eaten with NGAPI), and (3) trifles.

[593]

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14: Brant E-5 (1949-50) 1954 AP1 Burma
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One of the most popular foods of these vendors is mohingha. Rice noodles are made by pounding rice into a flour, mixing it with water, and grinding into a paste between two flat stone slabs. After the excess water has been expressed from this paste, it is pushed through sieves with narrow holes, to form noodles. Once dried, the noodles are cooked and mixed with a curry to make mohingha. 252

A beverage sold regularly by food vendors is molessaun. It is made of sugar, cocoanut milk and bits of rice noodles, mixed together. The villagers consider this drink very tasty and refreshing. 272

7. Shopkeeping and Middleman Trading. The typical shop in the village consists of nothing more than a few large glass jars containing cigars, matches, candy, soap, and various other articles, set out on the porch in front of a house. The stocks of these are very small and are periodically replenished by purchase in Rangoon. Customers are occasional and sales are very small. 414

Seventeen villagers devote their main activity to what we have called middleman trading. These persons make a living by periodically buying quantities of such goods as second-hand lumber from dismantled dwellings, bamboo, cloth, etc., and selling them in the village and nearby places.

8. Urban Labor. The nineteen individuals listed in Table II as urban laborers are employed in a government medical warehouse in Rangoon. They are unskilled workers who perform such tasks as moving boxes of medical supplies in and out of the establishment and arranging them in the warehouse. These people commute daily between Tadagale and their place of work by bus. 464 369

These are the numerically most significant of the variety of occupations followed by villagers. There are six unemployed persons and fourteen who are not gainfully employed because of old age, ill health, or blindness. The great majority of the married women and unmarried girls are occupied most of the time with domestic housework, looking after small children, and helping with gardening. 463

The whole character of the occupational pattern is shifting and unstable. Individuals move opportunistically from one form of activity to another as circumstances change, in an effort to round out a living. Informants stated that in former times the community was much more agricultural, but that owing to loss of land through indebtedness people had gradually left farming for other occupations. 463 178

Income

In analyzing our data on income, figures for the Indians of Tadagale have been calculated separately. The Indians are occupationally a homogeneous group, all engaged in dairy farming. The range and average of income within this small group is so far above that of the Burmese that a misleading idea of the community's economic structure would be conveyed were the data on the Indians included in a single, overall computation for the village. 434 [563]

The following tables show family incomes.

14: Brant E-5 (1949-50) 1954 AP1 Burma
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objects used in the ceremony. The largest table is covered with a lace cloth and on it stands an alabaster statue of the Buddha in a carved and decorated case. Before the figure of the Buddha are offerings of flowers, water, a candle bananas and coconuts, placed in a special bowl. There is also a dish of puffed rice, a carved gilt bowl, and three new bowls, the latter for the initiates. Each of the bowls contains some of the traditional articles required for a monk: beads, water cups, needle and thread, a straight razor. The carved, gilt begging bowl symbolizes the type used by the Buddha when he was on earth. The second table contains offerings of bananas and coconuts for the monks, and richly decorated gilt trays symbolic of the kind used in the days of the Burmese kings but now only for purposes of decoration. These will be carried by young girls in the procession. The third table contains robes and other gifts for the several monks who are invited to the ceremony. On the fourth table are mats and pillows for the initiates to use. They will be presented to the monks as gifts afterwards.

The elaborate preparations for the ceremony begin on the morning of the preceding day. Young girls go from house to house to borrow betelnut boxes, mats and carpets. In the afternoon a five piece orchestra, hired for the occasion, arrives at the place of the ceremony. It consists of two large drums, a small drum, a wind instrument, a xylophone, and cymbals. Now an elder makes offerings to the spirits (nats). Bananas, a coconut and a lighted candle are placed on a tray. The elder holds the tray and recites invocations to the good and the evil spirits. The evil spirits are implored not to harass any person who participates in the ceremony, because it is a work of merit; the good spirits are reminded of the meritorious nature of the ceremony and asked to watch over and protect the proceedings. As the spirits are so addressed he swings the trey towards each member of the orchestra in turn, sometimes three, sometimes nine, and sometimes twelve times. The orchestra continues to play intermittently throughout the afternoon, evening, and into the night. Early in the evening the young men of the village come to the monastery with their own musical instruments -- mandolins, guitars, and violins -- and sing and dance into the early morning hours. The orchestra group remains at the monastery all night.

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About midnight, a group of men who are responsible for cooking the food set to work at this task. Women do not normally cook meals for an occasion as large as this; it is felt that the quantities of food required and the amount of labor involved is too much for them to manage. Around three hundred people are expected at a large shinbyu in the village. The cooks, about a dozen middle-aged men, sit around the fire they have lighted in a clearing a short distance from the monastery, drink tea, smoke, and make jokes. One man is introduced to the group as the 'all-Burma curry-cooking expert'; another is called 'No. 1 soup cook'; a third is dubbed 'best rice cook of the village.' During the night they prepare large quantities of boiled rice, pork curry, sour bean sprouts, fried fish paste, and a vegetable soup.

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[522]

Early on the morning of the day for the ceremony, the initiates are dressed by friends of their families. After a bath, thanakha, an astringent-like paste made from ground tree bark and water, is applied to their faces. Then they don silk longyis and thin, white muslin jackets, beneath which they wear cotton vests. The longyi is very ornate, made of heavy silk, and is seamless. Gold chains and necklace, bracelets and rings are put on. The head dress is a fine silk cloth, wound round the head, and decorated with garlands of flowers.

[491]

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

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[312]
[271]
[482]
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[805]

137. CARRYING HOME THE WATER-POTS.

fuel is required only for cooking and in manufactures.

Rice is the staple of every meal, except in the dry zone. The millet and sorghum which there take the place of rice are cooked in the same way but need longer boiling. "A rice-boiling" (*ta-ô-dyé*) is the common phrase for an interval of about twenty minutes. After washing in several waters, rice is put to boil in an earthen pot with enough water to cover it, and boiled till the grains are quite clear. The rice-water is poured off, and the rice is put back on the fire to steam. Rice is cooked fresh for every meal and is eaten hot. A relish is made to eat with the rice, consisting of a watery stew of fresh greens or of pulse. The fat used is sesamum oil (*hnan-zi*). This curry is seasoned with turmeric (*sanwin*), capsicum (*ngàyôtthi*—chilli), and either salt-fish or *ngapi* (p. 92). Fresh fish, prawns, or meat are added if available. In default of cultivated vegetables, wild greens of all sorts, bamboo-shoots and sprouting leaves, are used. Pickles of lime and other fruits are used as separate relishes. There are two meals in the day, both of the same nature. The morning meal is eaten at about nine o'clock, the other before dark. Meals are taken by the household in common. The housewife or daughter gets mats ready in the *hyanding* and places in the centre a *byat*—a large, deep, wooden platter, lacquered red—into which she turns out the cooked rice (*tamin*). In the middle of the rice is set a bowl with the curry and a spoon. The family squat round the *byat*, or if a large household round several.

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[271]

138. STAND FOR THE DRINKING-WATER.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

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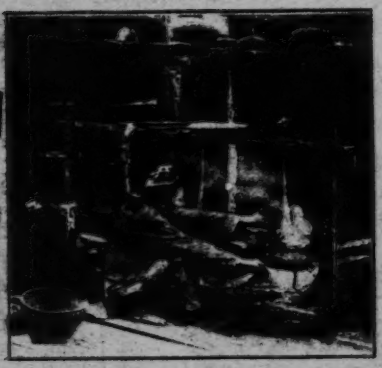

142. THE COOKING-PLACE.

of a tree of the dry zone, ground into a paste with water on a special stone. It is perfumed by grinding sandal-wood with it. The paste is smeared on the face and left to dry, after which the excess is rubbed off. For great occasions the paste is left on over-night. But ordinarily the face is "freshed" with water (*mye-hna-thit*) on rising in the morning. The Burmans admire white teeth and polish them with charcoal on a soft stick. The old style of women's hair-dress was like the early *chignon* fashion of about 1867 in Europe. The *saddn* in this form is seen in Nos. 30, 381. About 1880 a new fashion was set by the palace, which now prevails. Tresses of false hair are much used by the women. Flowers in the hair and jewellery complete the toilet, which, like that of the actors in the *pwé*, is performed in view of everyone. The men's toilet consists in combing their long hair (No. 127). They take pride in the size of their top-knot (*yaung*) and rarely eke it out with false hair in the way the women do. The heavy knot works loose, so that combing and knotting up go on perpetually. The hair of both sexes is coarse and straight and jet black. Children's hair gets foxy from alternate exposure to rain and sun. The hair is smoothed with cocoanut oil and washed with soap-nut once or twice a month. At other times the Burmans are concerned to avoid wetting their hair. The native wooden combs are coarse, but the Chinese tooth comb is beginning to serve a useful purpose. Burmans turn grey at forty to fifty years of age and are white at sixty to seventy. Baldness is rare. Aged men still wear their little top-knot. The men's faces are smooth, many

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143. THE FAMILY MEAL (OLD STYLE).

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
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191. BRICK MAKERS. P. 97

CHAPTER V

TRADES AND PROFESSIONS

463 Most artizans in the rural settlements are cultivators as well, plying their special trade in the by-season. The [256] home industries continue to be practised in the seaport towns, where certain of them, such as rice-cleaning, are conducted wholesale (No. 184). The largest plant used in [388] the country villages is the oil-mill (*sloln*). The cooking-• [252] oil of Burma is pressed from the seed of sesamum (*hnan*), a black grain resembling [402] rape. It is not so delicate as olive oil, but is used for adulterating the latter. Oil-cake is used for fodder. The mill consists of a great mortar made of the 000 trunk of some hard-timbered tree with a pestle of the same. *Hnan* is grown as

192. OIL-MILL.